CLAIMS

What is Claimed is:

1. In a wireless communication network comprising a plurality of terrestrial receivers and terrestrial transmitters, each serving a service region, a method of providing at least a portion of digital data to a user, comprising the steps of:

(a) receiving the portion of the digital data in a satellite receiver;

(b) providing the received portion of the digital data to at least one of the terrestrial transmitters; and

(c) transmitting the received portion of the digital data to the user within the service region.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the satellite receiver is communicatively coupled to the terrestrial transmitter.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the wireless communication network is a cellular telephone network.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

determining if a transmission requirement of the digital data exceeds a capacity of the wireless communication network; and

performing steps comprising steps (a) through (c) only if the transmission requirements of the digital data exceed the capacity of the wireless communication network.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of determining if a transmission requirement of the portion of the digital data exceeds a capacity of the wireless communication network comprises the steps of:

determining the transmission requirement for the portion digital data;

determining the transmission capacity of the wireless communication network; and

comparing the transmission requirements for the digital data with the transmission capacity of the wireless communication network.

6. The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

providing the portion of the digital data to a satellite uplink, uplinking the portion of the digital data from the satellite uplink to a satellite, and transmitting the digital data only if the transmission requirements of the portion of the digital data exceed the capacity of the wireless communication network.

7. The method of claim 4, wherein the transmission requirement comprises a minimum bandwidth.

8. The method of claim 4, wherein the transmission requirement comprises a size of the media program.

9. The method of claim 4, wherein the transmission requirement comprises a quality of service (QoS) parameter.

10. The method of claim 4, wherein the transmission requirement comprises a cost of service parameter.

11. The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

receiving information describing in which service region the user is located; and

transmitting the digital data only to a satellite receiver associated with the service region in which the user is located.

12. In a wireless communication network comprising a plurality of terrestrial receivers and terrestrial transmitters, each serving a service region, an apparatus for providing at least a portion of digital data to a user, comprising:

means for receiving the portion of the digital data in a satellite receiver; and

means for providing the received portion of the digital data to at least one of the terrestrial transmitters for transmission to the user.

13. The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising means for transmitting the portion received digital data to the user within the service region using the terrestrial transmitter.

14. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the wireless communication network is a cellular telephone network.

15. The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising:

means for determining if a transmission requirement of the digital data exceed a capacity of the wireless communication network; and

means for providing the portion of the digital data to at least one of the terrestrial transmitters only if the transmission requirements of the digital data exceed the capacity of the wireless communication network.

16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the means for determining if a transmission requirement of the digital data exceeds a capacity of the wireless communication network comprises:

means for determining the transmission requirement for the digital data;

means for determining the transmission capacity of the wireless communication network; and

means for comparing the transmission requirements for the digital data with the transmission capacity of the wireless communication network.

17. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising:

means for providing the digital data to a satellite uplink, uplinking the digital data from the satellite uplink to a satellite, and transmitting the digital data only if the transmission requirements of the digital data exceed the capacity of the wireless communication network.

18. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the transmission requirement comprises a minimum bandwidth.

19. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the transmission requirement comprises a size of the media program.

20. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the transmission requirement comprises a quality of service (QoS) parameter.

21. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the transmission requirement comprises a cost of service parameter.

22. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising:

means for receiving information describing in which service region the user is located; and

means for transmitting the digital data only to a satellite receiver associated with the service region in which the user is located.

23. In a wireless communication network comprising a plurality of terrestrial receivers and terrestrial transmitters, each serving a service region, an apparatus for providing at least a portion of a digital data to a user, comprising:

a satellite antenna, for receiving a signal from a satellite, the signal including the portion of the digital data; and

a satellite receiver communicatively coupled to the satellite antenna for detecting and demodulating the signal to produce the portion of the digital data, the satellite receiver communicatively coupled to the terrestrial transmitter.

24. The apparatus of claim 23, wherein the communication network is a cellular telephone network.

25. The apparatus of claim 23, wherein the satellite antenna is disposed within the service region.

26. The apparatus of claim 23, wherein the satellite antenna is disposed proximate the terrestrial transmitter.